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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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April 10, 2003

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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: James A. Noyes
Director of Public Works

BOARD MOTION OF JANUARY 28, 2003, SYNOPSIS 14

BOUQUET CANYON ROAD NEAR ESQUERRA ROAD

As requested, we have completed our study on Bouquet Canyon Road between Shadow Valley Lane and Vasquez Canyon Road, regarding how this road can be made safer.

As you may be aware, speed limits are set in accordance with the California Vehicle Code and are determined by conducting Engineering and Traffic Surveys. This survey considers various factors such as prevailing speed of traffic, accident history, and roadway conditions. The prevailing speed is utilized as a reference based on the concepts that most motorists can be relied upon to drive in a reasonable manner. The accident history, surrounding development, and roadway configuration are also analyzed with respect to the prevailing speed to determine the appropriate speed limit.

Currently, the segment of Bouquet Canyon Road between Shadow Valley Lane and Vasquez Canyon Road has a posted speed limit of 50 mph and is radar enforced. Together with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), we have determined that radar enforcement is the most effective method to control speeding. Our speed survey revealed that some motorists are traveling at speeds higher than the 50-mph posted speed limit. Therefore, we will forward our speed survey to the Newhall CHP for their appropriate enforcement action.

Field observations also revealed that all signs and striping on Bouquet Canyon Road between Shadow Valley Lane and Vasquez Canyon Road are visible and in good condition. Our field review also confirmed that there are adequate traffic control devices along the study segment of this roadway. Although we recognize that not all accidents get reported, our review of the reported accident history on file with the CHP in the last 5-year period ending October 2002 revealed that the accident history in this segment of the roadway is comparable to other roadways within the County with similar conditions.

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We were able to obtain the CHP Traffic Collision Reports for the two accidents mentioned in the subject motion. In regard to the accident on November 7, 2002, that resulted in serious injuries to both drivers, a motorist was traveling northbound on Bouquet Canyon Road approximately 0.7 miles south of Vasquez Canyon Road at approximately 55 mph. For unknown reasons, the northbound motorist made an unsafe turning movement into the southbound lane and collided into the southbound motorist. The northbound motorist was in violation of unsafe turning movement and driving on the wrong side of the road.

The accident on December 26, 2002, that resulted in two fatalities occurred approximately 0.3 miles south of Vasquez Canyon Road. According to the CHP Traffic Collision Report, this accident was caused by the southbound motorist who was under the influence of alcohol and allowed his vehicle to cross over the solid double yellow lines while exiting a curved portion of the roadway.

Based on the above findings, the existing traffic control devices are adequate and no additional traffic control is recommended at this time.

However, to enhance the existing roadway condition, we are currently preparing the plan to widen Bouquet Canyon between Shadow Valley Lane and Vasquez Canyon Road to provide additional six feet of shoulder for both directions of traffic. We are anticipating to complete construction by February 2004.

This recommendation is consistent with the County Strategic Plan Goal of Service Excellence as implementation will enhance highway safety, traffic flow, and accommodate traffic-related concerns of residents and motorists.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or your staff may contact my Deputy, Tom Alexander, at (626) 458-4012.

MEM:rj

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cc: Supervisor Gloria Molina
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